

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

June 2, 1997

LB 798

in opposition to the bill, opposition to the idea that we immediately deregulate an industry that costs so much already. We have lost sight of the cost problem. Senator Lynch, I think, brought us back to that, talking about the elderly woman who died and the expense involved. Just a few years ago that was the key issue,...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...the cost of health care, the cost of Medicaid. Everything had gone up so much. What can we do to contain costs? And there was the effort at the national level to do national health insurance...national health plan, to look at the state level for different things. And of course now we've turned into a debacle, so we've all backed off of that. But the problem remains, we spend too much on health care in this country, too much waste and we need to find ways to save money, and we're taking a step backward from one way that we had in place to do something about it. I oppose LB 798.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Lynch.

SENATOR LYNCH: Thank you, Madam Chairman and members. To continue, I'm so old I can remember when the University of Nebraska and Creighton University used to pay Douglas County for the use of their beds for teaching beds, because they didn't have their own. I've got to also tell you that I had the good fortune of going over to Japan with the Asian American Health Foundation through Stanford University. A young fellow who used to work for me, to be completely frank, and is now a lawyer and also head of the medical profession at the medical school of Stanford. Over in Japan, Ernie mentioned, for example, that in our system we find out how quickly we can put a mother and the baby out of the hospital, so we can, quote, save money. Has nothing to do with quality of care. In Japan they have a universal system of health care, and they've had it about 30 years. We don't talk about it much over here, we only talk about Canada, we talk about Germany, we talk about England, we never do talk about Japan. You know why? Because it makes ours look pretty bad, makes ours look pretty bad. You know less than 5 percent of their gross national product goes towards health care. All the doctors are on salaries, and I know the doctors